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ABSTRACT

In six north-central Oklahoma cities, representatives from professional, technical, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled occupations were interviewed to determine their perceptions of the image of vocational education in Oklahoma. Findings for the seven specific research objectives included: (1) Concerning the adequacy of available vocational education offerings, the overall mean response indicated that, as a group, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, although analysis of variance revealed significant differences across interview sites, and (2) Concerning the quality of programs, professional workers responded at the highest level, unskilled workers at the lowest level, and analysis of variance revealed significant differences among the responses of the group at the .05 level. No statistically significant differences were found for the other objectives, which concerned perception of: (1) whether vocational education programs are able to benefit students of all ability levels (favorable response), (2) alignment of programs with local industry needs (neutral response), (3) vocational education as compared with the rest of education (favorable response), (4) whether programs achieve the objective of education for gainful employment (favorable response), and (5) dissemination of information on opportunities (neutral response). This narrative and tabular summary of research findings is based on a doctoral theses, announced as Ed 055 184. (CD)

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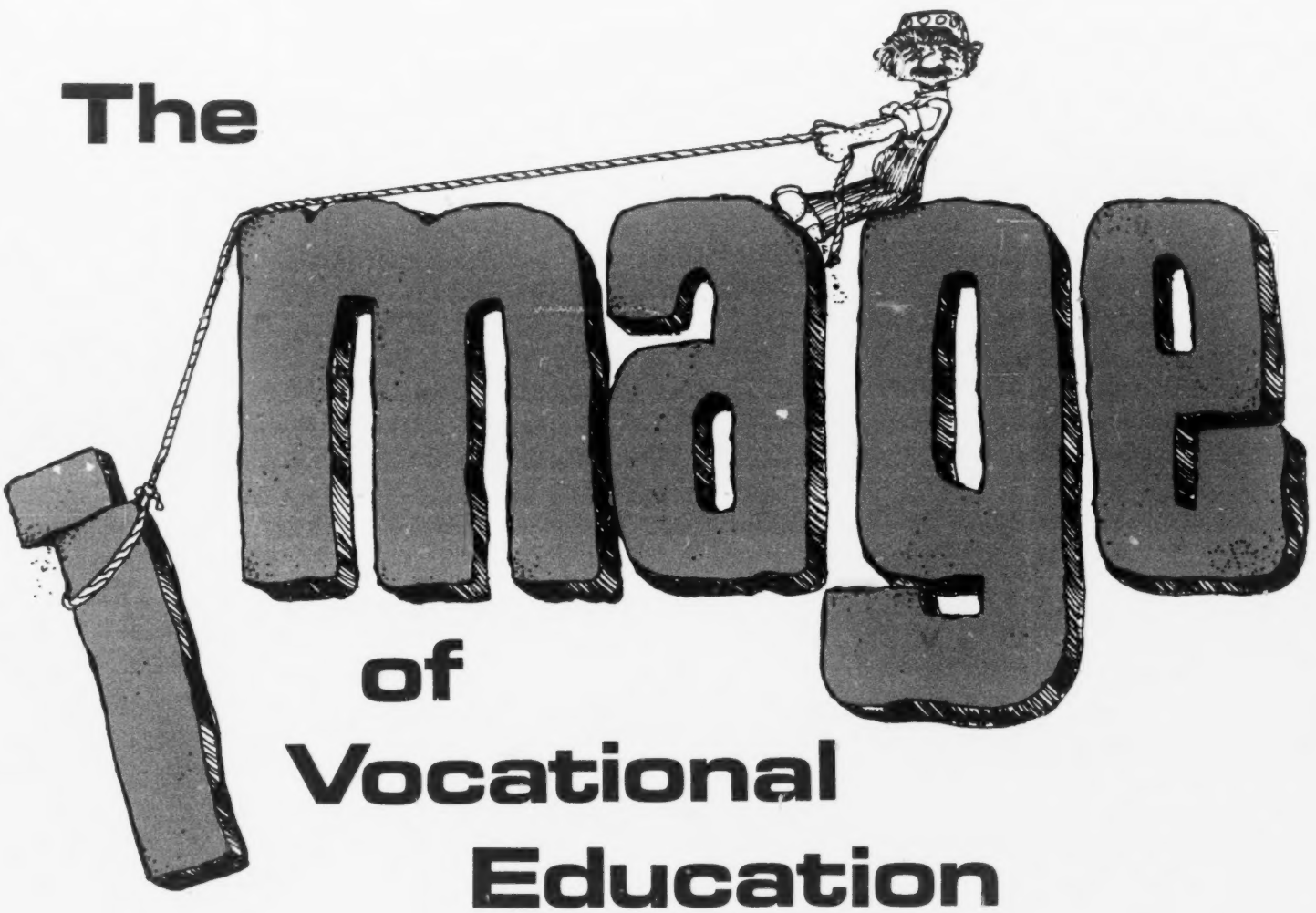

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Division of Research, Planning and Evaluation, State Department of Vocational and Technical Education,

SELECTED ASPECTS OF VOCATIONAL IMAGE AS PERCEIVED BY A PUBLIC CATEGORIZED BY OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

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Reproduced By Division of Research, Planning, and Evaluation
State Department of Vocational and Technical Education
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Statement of the Problem	1
	Purpose of the Study	2
	Objectives of the Study	2
	Development of the Study	3
II.	FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	5
III.	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	15
	Needed Improvement in Vocational Education	17
	Conclusions	18
	Recommendations	20
APPENDIX A		21
APPENDIX B		28

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I.	Summary of Mean Responses to Statements Concerning Vocational Image as Perceived by Individuals at Different Occupational Levels	6
II.	Mean Summary of Responses to the Research Objectives of the Study	11
III.	Rankings of Actions Needed to Improve the Image of Vocational Education by Interview Sites	12
IV.	Rankings of Actions Needed to Improve the Image of Vocational Education by Occupational Categories	14

SELECTED ASPECTS OF VOCATIONAL IMAGE AS PERCEIVED BY A PUBLIC CATEGORIZED BY OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

Scope and Method of Study: In this study, an effort was made to determine the image of vocational education in Oklahoma as perceived by members of a public categorized by levels of employment and to compare the image of vocational education perceived by persons comprising the respective categories in selected cities.

Six locations in northern-central Oklahoma were selected as sites from which to secure data for the study. In order for a city to be selected as a location for this study, it was required to have at least three of the following four programs in its secondary public school system: trade and industrial education, business and office education, vocational agriculture education and distributive education. The public in each location consisted of twenty individuals--four representatives of each of the following occupational categories: professional, technical, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled. Data were collected by the interview method at each of the designated interview sites.

Findings and Conclusions: As a group those interviewed responded neutrally regarding the adequacy of vocational education offerings, alignment of vocational programs with needs of local industry and information dissemination about opportunities available in vocational education. However, the public had a favorable perception toward vocational education in comparison with the rest of the educational system.

It was concluded that the respondents in the study were in agreement that the quality of vocational education programs, in Oklahoma, was good and that they perceived these programs as being able to serve students of all ability levels. They also agreed that vocational education programs were accomplishing their major purpose by providing education for gainful employment for all who desire it, need it, and show the initiative to obtain it.

The investigator concluded that, in general, the public interviewed was uninformed about certain aspects of vocational education; however, their overall perception toward these programs would appear to be favorable.

This publication is a summarization of a doctoral dissertation; and, for more detailed information, the reader should refer to the original study.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The rapid and extensive changes that are taking place in vocational education have created a need for vocational educators to be cognizant of the public attitude toward vocational training. To facilitate program planning, secure continuing cooperation and support, and thus to promote program effectiveness, it is important to know how various segments of the public--non-vocational educators, present and former students, parents and members of the business community--generally perceive vocational education programs. Are these programs perceived as being second class--as dumping grounds for "problem students" who may not be capable, for one reason or another, of succeeding in academic studies? Or, does the public hold the image that the student enrolled in a vocational program is simply following an alternate route to success which is respectable, equal and often preferred to the so-called academic or college preparatory route? Obviously, the concept of vocational education image to which the public subscribes has a great deal of bearing upon whether or not programs are successful in attempts to prepare individuals to become fulfilled, contributing members of society.

Statement of the Problem

A major question among Oklahoma vocational educators today is, "What is the image of vocational education in our state?" Vocational education in Oklahoma, as well as nationally, is experiencing a period of transition. Major changes in the scope, nature, direction, and goals of vocational education have taken place in the last five years. These changes are certain to continue at an accelerated rate in the period just ahead. Yet, the current image of vocational education is based largely on observations of programs which have grown out of former policies and practices.

It seems reasonable to assume that better planning of vocational education programs could be accomplished in Oklahoma if the current vocational image held by the public were known. Therefore, this study was an attempt to assess certain aspects of vocational image as perceived by selected segments of a public.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to determine the image of vocational education in Oklahoma as perceived by members of a public categorized by levels of employment and to compare the image of vocational education perceived by persons comprising the respective categories in selected cities.

Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following specific objectives were formulated:

1. To determine if the public perceives that more vocational programs should be offered at all educational levels;
2. To determine if the public perceives that the quality of secondary vocational education programs is adequate;
3. To determine if the public perceives that vocational programs can benefit students of all ability levels;
4. To determine the public perception of the way in which vocational education programs cooperate and are aligned with the needs of local industry;
5. To determine how the public perceives vocational education in comparison to the rest of the educational system;
6. To determine if the public perceives that vocational education programs are adequately accomplishing their major purpose, which is to provide education for gainful employment for all who desire it, need it, and show the initiative to obtain it;
7. To determine if the public perceives that it is adequately informed about opportunities available in and provided by vocational education.

Development of the Study

After the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and later the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, vocational leaders throughout the country became very concerned with the image of vocational education. At various vocational meetings the investigator attended, inevitably the speaker would mention "image." Some individuals would state the "vocational education image must be improved;" yet, they usually did not relate exactly what the image was or what part of vocational education needed to be improved in order to acquire the new image that was desired.

The investigator then became more interested in the image factor after becoming employed with the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education as an administrative intern. Repeatedly, the word "image" kept appearing in the speeches and discussions of leaders in this department; therefore, the investigator, with the approval of his major adviser, decided to conduct a study concerned with the image of vocational education in northern-central Oklahoma.

Six locations were selected in northern-central Oklahoma for this study concerning certain aspects of vocational image as perceived by a public categorized by occupational levels. The locations were Enid, Ponca City, Stillwater, Guthrie, Kingfisher, and Watonga. In order for a city to be selected as a location for this study, it was required to have at least three of the following four programs in its secondary public school system: trade and industrial education, business and office education, vocational agriculture education, and distributive education. The public in each location consisted of twenty individuals--four representatives of each of the following occupational categories: professional, technical, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled. To arrive at these occupations a book, Occupational Outlook Handbook, was used to select the occupations common to all six areas. The steering committee was then used to categorize these occupations. After the occupations had been categorized, a random selection of six occupations was made in each category, for each location, to determine the public to be interviewed. The first four of these comprised the group to be interviewed; however, in some cases it was necessary to interview one or both of the remaining because some in the initial group could not be interviewed for various reasons. The size of the sample and the number of locations to be interviewed were determined by the limitations imposed by using the interview technique.

The information needed for this study was secured by personal interview. An interview schedule was developed by the author and submitted to the steering committee for their critical review and suggestions. This schedule contained statements of both a positive and negative nature which were designed to determine the image held by the public of selected aspects of vocational education.

Subsequent activities included the development of the data-collection instrument, selection of the interview sites, and the selection of the various occupations to be considered in the study for interview purposes.

CHAPTER II

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to determine the public's perception concerning various aspects of vocational education. The following information is a summary of the responses obtained by personal interviews with citizens in various occupational levels.

In order to calculate mean responses to the statements, concerning vocational image, numerical values were assigned to the response categories according to the following pattern:

Strongly Agree = 5 (4.50 - 5.00)
Agree = 4 (3.50 - 4.49)
Neutral = 3 (2.50 - 3.49)
Disagree = 2 (1.50 - 2.49)
Strongly Disagree = 1 (0 - 1.49)

The statements in Table I are arranged in order according to the mean response thus calculated.

Table II reveals the mean summary of responses to the seven research objectives of the study. The objectives are arranged in order according to the calculated mean response.

In order to determine the attitude of the study population toward the way in which the image of vocational education could be improved, each respondent was asked to rank order a list of statements.

The respondents' rankings of actions to improve the image of vocational education are reported in Table III. To facilitate presentation of these data the statements were coded as follows:

1. Provide a wider variety of vocational education programs at all educational levels.
2. Recruit more students with higher academic ability into vocational education programs.

TABLE I

SUMMARY OF MEAN RESPONSES TO STATEMENTS CONCERNING VOCATIONAL IMAGE AS PERCEIVED BY INDIVIDUALS AT DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

Statement	Mean Response By Occupational Level					
	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS A BENEFICIAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THOSE WHO WILL ENTER THE LABOR MARKET UPON GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL.	4.75	4.71	4.29	4.33	4.54	4.52
YOUTH GROUPS (FFA, FHA, VICA, DECA, AND FBLA) ARE IMPORTANT PARTS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY FOR DEVELOPING GOOD CITIZENSHIP.	4.38	4.50	4.42	4.54	4.29	4.43
PRESENT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTE A GREAT DEAL TO THE ABILITY OF A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE TO FIND AND HOLD A JOB.	4.33	4.50	4.42	4.00	4.29	4.31
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS CAN BE OF BENEFIT TO EACH STUDENT REGARDLESS OF HIS ABILITY LEVEL.	4.21	3.88	4.08	4.04	4.17	4.08
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES CONTRIBUTE A GREAT DEAL TO THE ABILITY OF A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE TO FIND AND HOLD A JOB.	4.04	4.08	4.04	4.04	4.13	4.07
A WIDER VARIETY OF VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE OFFERED FOR THOSE STUDENTS NOT GOING TO COLLEGE.	4.00	4.13	3.83	4.00	4.00	3.99

TABLE I CONTINUED

Statement	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS SHOULD ENABLE STUDENTS TO HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING TO MEET INDUSTRIAL NEEDS.	3.88	4.00	3.83	4.08	4.00	3.96
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS CAN BE DESIGNED TO BENEFIT ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.	3.96	3.88	4.08	3.83	4.04	3.96
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WOULD BE STRENGTHENED THROUGH EXPOSING ALL STUDENTS AT ALL GRADE LEVELS TO OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION.	4.08	3.67	4.04	3.92	3.75	3.89
GOOD VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AID IN ATTRACTING NEW INDUSTRIES TO AN AREA.	3.83	4.08	4.04	3.67	3.75	3.87
THERE IS A NEED FOR COLLEGE LEVEL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.	4.08	3.88	3.83	3.75	3.83	3.87
CURRENT OFFERINGS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS SHOULD BE EXPANDED.	4.04	3.71	3.83	3.96	3.79	3.87
A GRADUATE OF A HIGH SCHOOL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IS GENERALLY SUITED ONLY FOR UNSKILLED WORK.	3.92	3.71	4.04	3.88	3.63	3.84
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ARE OFTEN NOT INFORMED SUFFICIENTLY ABOUT VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION OFFERINGS AVAILABLE TO TRAIN OR RETRAIN WORKERS.	3.58	3.79	3.92	3.83	3.75	3.77

TABLE I CONTINUED

Statement	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION HAS PROVED ITSELF TO BE AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF THE CURRICULUM IN HIGH SCHOOLS.	4.00	3.83	3.79	3.67	3.58	3.77
BRIGHT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO ENTER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.	3.96	3.67	3.46	3.88	3.83	3.76
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS A MAJOR ANSWER TO THE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT.	3.71	3.88	3.75	3.75	3.25	3.67
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES ARE AMONG THE MOST VALUABLE COURSES A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CAN TAKE IN PREPARING FOR FURTHER EDUCATION.	3.33	3.33	3.46	3.63	3.67	3.48
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS OFFERING A SUFFICIENT VARIETY OF CHOICES TO STUDENTS.	2.83	2.96	3.67	3.58	3.50	3.31
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GENERALLY DO NOT KNOW ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.	3.63	2.71	3.29	3.33	2.96	3.19
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS BEFORE THEY ARE IN HIGH SCHOOL.	3.63	3.04	2.96	3.38	2.88	3.18
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ARE OFTEN NOT KEPT UP-TO-DATE WITH THE NEEDS OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY.	3.13	3.08	2.79	2.79	2.88	2.93
VOCATIONAL PERSONNEL ARE DOING AN ADEQUATE JOB OF INFORMING PARENTS OF THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.	2.67	2.75	2.71	3.04	2.71	2.78

TABLE I CONTINUED

Statement	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS.	2.42	2.21	2.79	3.13	2.75	2.66
IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A SOUND BASIC EDUCATION THAN TO USE THE TIME FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.	2.17	2.79	2.54	2.58	2.66	2.55
THERE ARE CURRENTLY ENOUGH STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL	2.29	2.63	2.33	2.75	2.63	2.53
STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES UNTIL THEY REACH THE JUNIOR OR SENIOR LEVEL IN HIGH SCHOOL.	2.13	2.79	2.42	2.42	2.75	2.50
STUDENTS INTERESTED IN A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSE SHOULD ATTEND AN AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL OR TRADE SCHOOL RATHER THAN A REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL.	2.92	2.21	2.38	2.46	2.42	2.48
SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS DO NOT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT.	2.08	2.42	2.38	2.25	2.58	2.34
VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS ARE LOOKING FOR THE ACADEMICALLY TALENTED STUDENT RATHER THAN PROVIDING FOR STUDENTS WITH LOW LEVELS OF ACADEMIC APTITUDE.	2.58	2.38	2.75	2.13	2.42	2.45

TABLE I CONTINUED

Statement	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
MOST STUDENTS WHO TAKE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES ARE SLOW LEARNERS AND COME FROM LOW INCOME FAMILIES.	2.38	2.42	2.17	2.46	2.16	2.32
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL IS HIGHLY OVERRATED.	1.83	2.33	2.25	2.54	2.63	2.32
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES ARE DESIGNED PRIMARILY FOR THE STUDENT WITH LIMITED ABILITIES.	2.13	2.00	2.04	2.50	2.42	2.22
IT IS NOT IMPORTANT TO TRAIN STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOL IF THEY PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE.	2.13	2.13	2.13	2.29	2.21	2.18
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RECEIVES MORE SUPPORT AND FUNDS THAN IT DESERVES.	1.96	2.00	2.08	2.13	2.29	2.09
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES TAKE UP SO MUCH OF A STUDENT'S TIME THAT COULD BE BETTER SPENT IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (SPORTS, BAND, ETC.)	1.66	2.04	1.92	2.17	2.00	1.96
ACADEMICALLY TRAINED STUDENTS, EVEN THOUGH INTERESTED IN THE AREA, SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED FROM ENROLLING IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.	1.67	1.79	1.92	2.00	2.08	1.89
MOST VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES LEAD NOWHERE.	1.63	1.63	1.58	2.04	2.04	1.78

TABLE II

MEAN SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objectives	Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Grand $\bar{X}$
TO DETERMINE IF THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES THAT THE QUALITY OF SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IS ADEQUATE.	4.19	4.01	4.02	3.85	3.83	3.98
TO DETERMINE IF THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ARE ADEQUATELY ACCOMPLISHING THEIR MAJOR PURPOSE WHICH IS TO PROVIDE EDUCATION FOR GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL WHO DESIRE IT, NEED IT, AND SHOW THE INITIATIVE TO OBTAIN IT.	3.91	3.85	3.91	3.77	3.72	3.83
TO DETERMINE IF THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES THAT VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS CAN BENEFIT STUDENTS OF ALL ABILITY LEVELS.	3.90	3.83	3.76	3.78	3.82	3.82
TO DETERMINE HOW THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN COMPARISON TO THE REST OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.	3.73	3.67	3.73	3.62	3.66	3.68
TO DETERMINE IF THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES THAT MORE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE OFFERED AT ALL EDUCATIONAL LEVELS.	3.48	3.22	3.46	3.43	3.38	3.39
TO DETERMINE IF THE PUBLIC PERCEIVES THAT IT IS ADEQUATELY INFORMED ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN AND PROVIDED BY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.	3.27	3.58	3.25	3.28	3.32	3.34
TO DETERMINE THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE WAY IN WHICH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS COOPERATE AND ARE ALIGNED WITH THE NEEDS OF LOCAL INDUSTRY.	3.28	3.30	3.23	3.21	3.25	3.25

TABLE III

RANKINGS OF ACTIONS NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY INTERVIEW SITES

State-ment	Enid		Guthrie		Watonga		Kingfisher		Stillwater		Ponca City		Overall	
	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum of Ranks	True Rank-ing	Sum Rank	True Rank
1	72	4	68	4	62	2	62	3	54	1	74	4	392	3
2	93	6	94	6	95	6	100	6	107	6	98	6	587	6
3	50	1	58	1	46	1	50	1	59	3	48	1	311	1
4	64	3	71	5	78	5	73	4	81	5	75	5	442	5
5	63	2	62	2	65	3	61	2	61	4	66	3	378	2
6	78	5	67	3	74	4	74	5	58	2	59	2	410	4

3. Do a better job of acquainting students with the world of work and of preparing them for related jobs.
4. Improve the working relationships between vocational education programs and local industries.
5. Provide more information about the opportunities available in vocational education.
6. Bring programs of vocational education into closer alignment with the program of the total school system in each community.

Only the sum of ranks and the true ranking of the statements are reported.

This "true" ranking of the items for the entire group of respondents would be as follows:

1. Do a better job of acquainting students with the world of work and of preparing them for related jobs.
2. Provide more information about the opportunities available in vocational education.
3. Provide a wider variety of vocational education programs at all educational levels.
4. Bring programs of vocational education into closer alignment with the program of the total school system in each community.
5. Improve the working relationships between vocational education programs and local industry.
6. Recruit more students with higher academic ability into vocational education programs.

Table IV reveals the results of comparing the rankings of those composing the occupational categories. It is noteworthy that this comparison was the same as by interview site.

TABLE IV

RANKINGS OF ACTIONS NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

Statement	Professional		Technical		Skilled		Semiskilled		Unskilled		Overall	
	Sum of Ranks	True Ranking	Sum of Ranks	True Ranking	Sum of Ranks	True Ranking	Sum of Ranks	True Ranking	Sum of Ranks	True Ranking	Sum Rank	True Rank
1	75	4	66	2	83	4	86	4	82	4	392	3
2	121	6	115	6	116	6	113	6	122	6	587	6
3	72	2	51	1	60	1	68	2	60	1	311	1
4	98	5	84	3	82	3	93	5	85	5	442	5
5	65	1	95	5	78	2	66	1	74	2	378	2
6	73	3	93	4	85	5	78	3	81	3	410	4

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was concerned with determining the image of vocational education in Oklahoma as perceived by a public categorized by occupational levels. Seven specific research objectives were developed to guide the conduct of the study. The research findings of the study in summary form are as follows:

1. One specific research objective of the study was concerned with the public's image as to the adequacy of vocational education offerings available to students. The overall mean response by occupational categories and interview sites to the group of statements developed to measure this objective was 3.38 or neutral indicating that as a group the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed regarding the adequacy of current offerings. A 3.48 mean response for all professionals was the highest level while a 3.22 for the technical workers was the lowest. The analysis of variance calculation on the data revealed that there were significant differences among the opinions of respondents when comparisons were made across interview sites.

2. Research Objective Number Two was designed to determine the public's perception toward the quality of vocational education programs. Responses to the six quality assessment statements were combined and the overall mean response of 3.98 was found to be at the agree level. Professional workers responded at the highest level (4.19) while the unskilled category response of 3.83 was the lowest. The analysis of variance test on the data obtained from the occupational categories yielded an F value of 3.00, which indicated there were significant differences among the responses of the groups at the .05 level. No significant variation was found among interview sites or interaction of categories and sites.

3. The primary concern of Research Objective Number Three was to determine if the public interviewed perceived vocational education programs as being able to benefit students of all ability levels. The public agreed that such programs could benefit students of all ability levels. This was evidenced by an overall mean response of 3.82 or agree. A 3.90 mean response for the professional category was the highest while a 3.76 for the skilled workers was the lowest. Statistical analysis provided calculated F values below the predetermined level of probability. Therefore, no statistically significant difference was found which reveals the variation in opinion among groups was not significant.

4. The public perception toward Research Objective Number Four, regarding the alignment of vocational education programs with the needs of local industry, was found to be neutral with a 3.26 overall mean response. Technical workers responded at the highest level (3.30) while the semiskilled category response of 3.21 was the lowest. F values were calculated and determined to be below the level required to be significant at the .05 level of confidence.

5. Determining the public perception regarding vocational education in comparison to the rest of education was the purpose of Research Objective Number Five. This public had a favorable perception toward vocational education in comparison with the rest of the educational system as indicated by the mean response of 3.68 or agree. A 3.73 mean response for the professional and skilled categories was the highest while a 3.62 for the semiskilled workers was the lowest. However, statistical analysis provided calculated F values that were found to be below the required value for significant differences at the .05 level of probability.

6. This public unanimously agreed that vocational education programs are adequately accomplishing their major purpose which is to provide education for gainful employment for all who desire it, need it, and show the initiative to obtain it. This was evidenced by an overall mean response of 3.87. The lowest response was 3.72 for the unskilled workers to a high of 3.91 for the professional and skilled categories. The calculated F scores on

comparisons of the several sources possible variation did not reach the values required to be significant at the .05 level.

7. Research Objective Number Seven, regarding information dissemination about opportunities available in vocational education, received an overall mean response of 3.35 or neutral from this public. Technical workers responded at the highest level (3.58) while the skilled category response of 3.26 was the lowest. Statistical analysis of the data revealed F scores lower than the required values necessary to indicate significant differences among respondent and interview site groups at the .05 level of significance.

Needed Improvement in Vocational Education

In order to determine the attitude of the study population toward the way in which the image of vocational education could be improved, each respondent was asked to rank order a list of statements. The following represents their "true" ranking of the statements as determined by treatment of the responses with Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance W:

1. Do a better job of acquainting students with the world of work and of preparing them for related jobs.
2. Provide more information about the opportunities available in vocational education.
3. Provide a wider variety of vocational education programs at all educational levels.
4. Bring programs of vocational education into closer alignment with the program of the total school system in each community.
5. Improve the working relationships between vocational education programs and local industries.
6. Recruit more students with higher academic ability into vocational education programs.

Conclusions

Inspection and interpretation of the study findings prompted the formulation of certain conclusions by the investigator as detailed below.

Conclusion 1

The public was not knowledgeable enough concerning the adequacy of vocational education offerings available to students to offer an opinion either positive or negative as indicated by their neutral response to the group of statements relating to this point.

Conclusion 2

The respondents of the study were in agreement that the quality of vocational education programs, in Oklahoma, was good. This was evidenced by an agree response to the statements designed to measure their perception concerning this point.

Conclusion 3

The interviewed public perceived vocational education as being able to serve students of all ability levels. This was evidenced by a mean response of "agree" from both the occupational categories and interview sites.

Conclusion 4

The respondents of the study were not knowledgeable concerning the manner in which vocational education programs work with and are aligned with the needs of local industry as indicated by their neutral response to the statements relating to this point.

Conclusion 5

The interviewed public responded favorably toward vocational education in comparison with the rest of the educational system as was evidenced by their agree response to the statements designed to measure their perception concerning this point.

Conclusion 6

The interviewed public agreed that vocational education programs are accomplishing their major purpose by providing education for gainful employment for all who desire it, need it, and show the initiative to obtain it. This was evidenced by a mean response of "agree" from both the occupational categories and interview sites.

Conclusion 7

The interviewed public was not adequately informed about the opportunities available in and provided for by vocational education programs as indicated by an overall neutral response to the statements designed to measure their perception concerning this point.

Conclusion 8

The respondents interviewed in the study did not perceive that vocational education was adequately acquainting students with the world of work, nor was it providing adequate information concerning the opportunities available.

Conclusion 9

The investigator has concluded that, in general, the public interviewed was uninformed about vocational education; however, their overall perception toward these programs would appear to be favorable.

Recommendations

On the basis of data obtained for the study, certain general recommendations and recommendations for additional research were developed.

General Recommendations

1. Vocational education personnel should make a concerted effort to more adequately inform the general public concerning the opportunities available in vocational education. It seems reasonable that a large portion of this information dissemination process should be conducted by competent guidance counselors, teachers, and school administrators.
2. Vocational education personnel at all levels should make an effort to uncover and publicize the current and anticipated employment opportunities and relay this information to students.
3. Vocational educators should strive to help the general public realize the value, dignity, and personal fulfillment associated with the careers in the world of work.

Additional Research

It is recommended that a study of the same basic design as this research endeavor be conducted on a state-wide basis in order to help vocational educators determine the image of vocational education in all sections of the state.

As perceived by the investigator, it would be of value to conduct research, of the same type as this study, to determine the attitude of school administrators, school board members, parents and students toward vocational education programs.

Appendix A

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT ENID

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
School Counselor*	Insurance Agent*	Welder*	Waitress*	Motel Maid
Elementary School Teacher*	Chamber of Commerce Manager*	Carpenter	Housepainter	Grocery Store Stocker*
Minister	Clothing Store Mgr. or Owner*	Automobile Salesman*	Liquor Store Operator*	Construction Laborer*
Non-vocational Teacher*	Hospital Administrator	Mechanic*	Housewife*	Farm Laborer
Lawyer	Farm Owner	Implement Dealer*	Feed Store Employee	City Water Dept. Worker*
School Administrator*	Banker*	Railroad Telegrapher	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	Building Custodian*

*Indicates occupation interviewed

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT GUTHRIE

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
School Administrator*	Radio and TV Repairman	Automobile Salesman*	Liquor Store Operator	Construction Laborer*
Non-vocational Teacher*	Clothing Store Mgr. or Owner*	Farm Equipment Mechanic	Feed Store Employee*	Farm Laborer
Vocational Teacher*	Farm Owner	Bookkeeper*	House Painter	Building Custodian*
Veterinarian	Real Estate Agent*	Carpenter	Waitress*	Grocery Store Stocker*
Minister	Insurance Agent*	Barber*	Postal Employee*	Motel Maid
Pharmacist*	Newspaper Reporter*	Mechanic*	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	City Sanitation Worker*

*Indicates occupation interviewed

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT WATONGA

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
School Counselor*	Banker*	Welder*	House Painter	Construction Laborer
Elementary School Teacher*	Nurse	Implement Dealer*	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	Farm Laborer
Veterinarian	Newspaper Reporter*	Carpenter	Feed Store Employee*	City Water Dept. Worker*
Librarian*	Chamber of Commerce Manager*	Bank Teller*	Housewife	Building Custodian*
Vocational Teacher*	Insurance Agent*	Fireman*	Waitress*	Motel Maid*
Minister	Radio and TV Repairman	Plumber	Liquor Store Operator*	Grocery Store Stocker*

*Indicates occupation interviewed

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT KINGFISHER

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
Elementary School Teacher*	Insurance Agent*	Bookkeeper*	Feed Store Employee	City Sanitation Worker*
Non-vocational Teacher*	Radio and TV Repairman	Carpenter*	Waitress*	Farm Laborer
Veterinarian	Chamber of Commerce Manager	Plumber	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	Building Custodian*
Pharmacist*	Real Estate Agent*	Jeweler or Jewelry Repairman*	Housewife	Grocery Store Stocker*
Minister	Clothing Store Mgr. or Owner*	Mechanic*	Postal Employee*	Motel Maid

*Indicates occupation interviewed

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT STILLWATER

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
Lawyer	Real Estate Agent*	Implement Dealer*	Liquor Store Operator*	Building Custodian
School Counselor*	Farm Owner*	Fireman*	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	Farm Laborer*
Non-vocational Teacher*	Clothing Store Mgr. or Owner*	Law Officer	Postal Employee	Motel Maid*
School Administrator*	Nurse	Beautician*	Feed Store Employee*	Grocery Store Stocker*
Minister*	Banker*	Barber*	Waitress*	Construction Laborer*
Elementary School Teacher	Radio and TV Repairman	Automobile Salesman	Housewife	City Water Dept. Worker

*Indicates occupation interviewed

STUDY POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AT PONCA CITY

Professional	Technical	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
School Counselor*	Real Estate Agent*	Shoe Repairman	Postal Employee	Building Custodian*
Non-vocational Teacher	Newspaper Reporter	Motel Manager*	Waitress*	City Sanitation Worker*
School Administrator*	Hospital Administrator*	Barber*	House Painter	Farm Laborer
Minister*	Farm Owner*	Bank Teller*	Liquor Store Operator*	Motel Maid*
Elementary School Teacher*	Banker*	Fireman	Feed Store Operator*	Construction Laborer
Veterinarian	Radio and TV Repairman	Implement Dealer*	Gasoline Service Station Attendant*	Grocery Store Stocker*

*Indicates occupation interviewed

Appendix B

CITY _____ OCCUPATION _____

We are attempting to determine how the general public feels about vocational education in selected communities. As a school patron and taxpayer, you are an important member of the public and the extent to which you agree with the following statements will benefit us a great deal in measuring public opinion.

Please indicate how you feel about each of the statements by using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

N = Neutral

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

1.	Vocational education is a beneficial educational program for those who will enter the labor market upon graduation from high school.	SA A N D SD
2.	Present vocational education programs contribute a great deal to the ability of a high school graduate to find and hold a job.	SA A N D SD
3.	Vocational education in the high school is highly overrated.	SA A N D SD
4.	Youth groups (FFA, FHA, VICA, DECA, and FBLA) are important parts of vocational education, especially for developing good citizenship.	SA A N D SD
5.	Good vocational education programs aid in attracting new industries to an area.	SA A N D SD
6.	A graduate of a high school vocational education program is generally suited only for unskilled work.	SA A N D SD
7.	Vocational education is offering a sufficient variety of choices to students.	SA A N D SD
8.	There are currently enough students in vocational education at the high school level.	SA A N D SD
9.	Vocational education is a major answer to the problems of unemployment.	SA A N D SD
10.	Vocational education would be strengthened through exposing all students at all grade levels to occupational information.	SA A N D SD

11.	Vocational personnel are doing an adequate job of informing parents of the importance and value of vocational education.	SA A N D SD
12.	Most vocational education courses lead nowhere.	SA A N D SD
13.	Vocational education receives more support and funds than it deserves.	SA A N D SD
14.	A wider variety of vocational programs should be offered for those students not going to college.	SA A N D SD
15.	Vocational educators are looking for the academically talented student rather than providing for students with low levels of academic aptitude.	SA A N D SD
16.	It is not important to train students in vocational education in high school if they plan to attend college.	SA A N D SD
17.	Vocational education courses are among the most valuable courses a high school student can take in preparing for further education.	SA A N D SD
18.	Vocational education courses contribute a great deal to the ability of a high school graduate to find and hold a job.	SA A N D SD
19.	There is a need for college level vocational education programs.	SA A N D SD
20.	Vocational education courses take up so much of a student's time that could be better spent in extracurricular activities (sports, band, etc.).	SA A N D SD
21.	Current offerings of vocational education in high schools should be expanded.	SA A N D SD
22.	Bright students should be encouraged to enter vocational education programs.	SA A N D SD
23.	Business and industry are often not informed sufficiently about vocational and technical education offerings available to train or retrain workers.	SA A N D SD
24.	Vocational education courses are designed primarily for the student with limited abilities.	SA A N D SD
25.	Vocational education programs are often not kept up to date with the needs of business and industry.	SA A N D SD
26.	Area vocational-technical schools should enable students to have more opportunities for training to meet industrial needs.	SA A N D SD

27.	Vocational education has proved itself to be an indispensable part of the curriculum in high schools.	SA	A	N	D	SD
28.	High school students generally do not know about opportunities available in vocational education.	SA	A	N	D	SD
29.	It is more important to provide students with a sound basic education than to use the time for vocational education.	SA	A	N	D	SD
30.	Vocational education programs should be made available to students before they are in high school.	SA	A	N	D	SD
31.	Vocational education programs can be of benefit to each student regardless of his ability level.	SA	A	N	D	SD
32.	Most students who take vocational education courses are slow learners and come from low income families.	SA	A	N	D	SD
33.	Vocational education programs can be designed to benefit all high school students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
34.	Secondary vocational education programs do not prepare students for employment.	SA	A	N	D	SD
35.	I am not familiar with vocational education opportunities that are being made available to students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
36.	Academically talented students, even though interested in the area, should be discouraged from enrolling in vocational education programs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
37.	Students interested in a vocational education course should attend an area vocational-technical or trade school rather than a regular high school.	SA	A	N	D	SD
38.	Students should not be allowed in vocational education courses until they reach the junior or senior level in high school.	SA	A	N	D	SD

39. From your personal point of view, what would be the order of importance of the following factors for improving the future image of vocational education? (Rank order the factors by placing "1" before the one you consider most important, "2" before the second most important, etc.)

_____ Provide a wider variety of vocational education programs at all educational levels.

_____ Recruit more students with higher academic ability into vocational education programs.

_____ Do a better job of acquainting students with the world of work and of preparing them for related jobs.

_____ Improve the working relationships between vocational education programs and local industries.

_____ Provide more information about the opportunities available in vocational education.

_____ Bring programs of vocational education into closer alignment with the program of the total school system in each community.

_____ Other (please specify) _____